



Administrative Policies and Procedures: 16.11 DRAFT

Subject:	Shared Foster Homes	
Procedure Change Notice:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Section A3-clarification that shared homes can only be affiliated with 1 provider.◆ Section B3-clarification the assigned DCS regional employee is responsible for fiscal procedures	Revised: 12/12/16
Authority:	TCA 36-1-101–142, 36-1-201, 37-4-201 et seq, 37-5-105, 37-5-106, 39-17-1315; Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC); Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006, HR 4472; Adoption and Safe Families, P.L. 105-89; Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006,P.L. 109-239 and the Social Security Act; Fostering Connections To Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, P.L. 110-351	
Standards:	DCS Practice Standards: 3-100, 3-300, 3-301, 3-302, 3-303, 3-304, 3-305; COA: PA-FC 6.01, PA-FC 6.02	
Application:	All Department of Children’s Services Foster Care Employees, Supervisory Employees and Contract Provider Agency Employees	
Policy Statement:		
<p>The Department of Children’s Services (DCS) and active Contract Providers may agree to share foster homes for DCS children. Specific agreements must be documented in writing and signed by the DCS Regional Administrator/designee and the Director of the Contract Provider Agency/designee.</p> <p>Foster homes that are identified through the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) process as a proposed placement for children, who are in the custody/guardianship of another State or agency, may be a current approved foster home as outlined in DCS policy. A Foster home may also be an approved foster home through a Contract Provider, or may be a shared foster home as defined in this policy and subject to application of this policy.</p>		
Purpose:		
<p>Having stable placements is a critical element to help reduce the impact of trauma children experience when they must be separated from their birth families. In cases where a child’s presenting level of needs decrease over time, it is best practice that placement changes do not occur. It is also very important to keep siblings together whenever possible. Sharing homes is a way to collaborate with partners and preserve sibling connections when children in sibling groups have varying levels of individual needs and is a way to provide more continuity of care.</p>		

Procedures:**A. Shared Home Rules**

1. Contract Provider homes may be used as shared homes due to the special needs of the child being placed in the home. Individual situations (such as the need for sibling placements) can be reviewed by the Team Coordinator of the Foster Parent Support Unit or Central office as needed.
2. A foster home must not provide placements for both DCS and another contract provider without a written agreement delineating the responsibilities of all parties involved and approved by the Regional Administrator/designee and the Director of the Contract Provider Agency that will share the foster home. (Refer to [Protocol for Re-Activation or Re-Classification of Foster Homes](#).)
3. ~~Because of the intensity of needs of children/youth referred to Contract Providers, families must not provide care for children in DCS custody and more than one Contract Provider at a time.~~ Shared homes may only be affiliated with one (1) contract agency provider.

B. Shared Home Approval Process

1. The Department or the Contract Provider foster family home, that originally approved the foster home, must provide a copy of the family's home study case file to DCS or the sharing agency, to be reviewed for compliance with all areas outlined in this policy and DCS policies, [16.3, Desired Characteristics of Foster Homes](#) and [16.4 Foster Home Approval](#).
2. The results of the home study review will be documented in the foster home case file along with the recommendation of the staff reviewer. The DCS Team Leader (TL) or Contract Provider Supervisor will also note their recommendation and will secure the approval of the Regional Administrator/designee and the Contract Provider Director.
3. If both DCS and the Contract Provider agree that the foster home may be shared, ~~the appropriate DCS employee, in the county where the foster family resides,~~ the assigned regional DCS employee will be responsible for completing all fiscal procedures to ensure the family can receive their foster home board payment via ~~TFACS~~.
4. These homes must be paid the same rate structure as any other DCS foster home. In ICPC cases, the establishment and distribution of foster home board payments to an approved Tennessee foster home, whether approved by DCS or Contract Provider or established as a shared home, is the responsibility of the sending state ~~who~~ that has custody/guardianship of the child/youth who is placed in Tennessee.
5. Special or extraordinary foster home board rates must be requested and approved by the appropriate DCS staff in accordance with DCS policy [16.29, Foster Home Board Rates](#).
6. In ICPC cases, the financial obligation is the responsibility of the sending state for a child/youth placed in an approved foster home in Tennessee. DCS is not responsible to provide foster home board payments.

4. Documentation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If both DCS and the Contract Provider agree that the foster home may be shared, the DCS FSW will ensure that the foster home is entered into the foster home section of <i>TFACTS</i> as a shared home. During the length of the shared agreement, DCS will be responsible for entering all documentation into <i>TFACTS</i>. 2. DCS and/or the Contract Provider staff will also be responsible for notifying any foster family who is interested in adoption that they may self-register at the AdoptUSKids website. Form, <i>CS-0950, AdoptUSKids Information Acknowledgement</i>, will be signed by the foster family and maintained in the Foster Home case file.
D. Shared Home Maintenance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The child casework responsibilities will remain with the DCS Family Service Worker (FSW) or Contract Provider staff who is responsible for each child. 2. The home study re-assessment will be the responsibility of the Contract Provider to ensure that the family continues to meet all the requirements outlined in DCS policy <u>16.8, Responsibilities of Approved Foster Homes</u> and the requirements of the Contract Provider agency. 3. An approved re-assessment through a Contract Provider will mean continued approval as a DCS foster home. The Contract Provider must provide DCS with copies of the family's annual re-assessments upon completion. 4. The re-assessment will be the responsibility of the Contract Provider because the training requirements are greater for therapeutic homes and a shared home would have to maintain their approval with the Contract Provider agency and DCS.

Forms:	<u>CS-0672 Shared Home Authorization</u> <u>CS-0950, AdoptUSKids Information Acknowledgement</u>
--------	---

Collateral Documents:	<u>Protocol for Re-Activation or Re-Classification of Foster Homes</u>
-----------------------	--